

POUJADE "MOVEMENT"

- I. Leader is Pierre Poujade, 35-year-old stationer of Saint-Céré (Lot), in south central France.
 - A. Said in youth to have been Doriot Fascist, later Gaullist: was NCO in WWII Resistance.
 - B. His movement, entitled "Union for the Defense of Merchants and Artisans" (UDCA), well-entrenched in home south-central area (France's poorest section), has extensive support in Southeast, is growing rapidly in north.
 - C. Aim--to protect small shopkeeper from tax inspector; to press for lower and differently apportioned taxes.
 - D. Specifically opposes '54 tax law (which provides penalties against withholders of tax information).

E. Poujade claims 800,000 followers:

400,000 dues-paying members (at 1,000 francs yearly) provide him with war-chest over \$1,000,000: Poujade now seeking stronger peasant support, in addition to shopkeepers.

II. "Movement" is outgrowth of accumulating economic pressures on small shop-owners since WWII.

A. As class, they live socially marginal lives: are fiercely proud of being self-employed, bourgeois.

B. Have been badly squeezed by competition of growing cooperatives, chain stores.

C. Are also targets of government drive for consolidation and removal of marginal enterprises.

III. "Movement" already has exerted strong pressures on government:

A. Was largely responsible for delaying Premier Faure's attempt to get special powers to revise taxes.

B. Final Assembly debate on special powers (28 Mar) now regarded as showdown between "government authority" and Poujade's "pressure from the street."

C. Poujade waging vigorous campaign for Assembly support in 28 March debate.

1. Has broken off all contacts with deputies, claiming they betrayed UDCA in earlier debate (19 Mar), when he had expected support from 300.

D. Plans two-hour protest strike of merchants on 28th.

1. This is a Monday, when most shops normally closed, so will be inconclusive indication his strength.

IV. Poujade movement's growing strength interpreted by some observers as threat to Re-

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- A. Non-Communist labor unions charge definite fascist overtones, citing Poujade's pre-war fascist affiliation.
- B. Signs of anti-semitism in his attacks on Mendes-France.
- C. Poujade takes anti-parliament stand, has made vicious attacks on individuals and government.
 - 1. In letter to Faure, said "The National Assembly closed all the bordellos in France but kept the biggest one open" (i.e. Assembly, itself).